

Residents as leaders: An innovative curriculum for the development of leadership skills in residency

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Doctors take on leadership roles in the provision and planning of clinical care, in advocating for patients and groups of patients and in the organization of educational and research programs.

The Medical Leadership Competency Framework outlines 5 domains in which doctors must develop their abilities in order to be successful leaders: personal qualities, working with others, managing services, improving services and setting directions.¹ The Framework acknowledges that the career stage of the physician or physician in training will influence his or her opportunity to develop and demonstrate these competencies.

We developed a new 2-part leadership skills development program for our postgraduate trainees. The first part is an intensive 5-day course focusing on the development of skills in the domains and elements of the Framework. The course is also informed by our long-running, successful Ottawa Academic Health Sciences Leadership Program for faculty members and other health professionals as well as a literature review.^{2,3} The second part of the program consists of a developmental assignment that offers the participant a new challenge or responsibility. This may include a specific project carried out within the context of the training program or in the clinical domain.

Alternatively, the participant can complete a placement within or external to the university or hospital environment; examples may include membership on a hospital committee or with a public health agency that is developing policy. Assistance in identifying projects or placements and mentorship in their completion is provided.

The first group of residents has been accepted into the program, and the course is scheduled for April 2009. The course schedule and evaluation will be available for presentation as well as examples of the projects or placements undertaken by the trainee group.

Reference(s):

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